

## Message Text

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C O N F I D E N T I A L ROME 9186

LIMDIS

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E.O. 11652: X-GDS-1  
TAGS: FAO, OCON, OREP (FRASER, DONALD M.)  
SUBJECT: FAO TECHNICAL COOPERATION PROGRAM

SUMMARY:

CONGRESSMAN DONALD M. FRASER'S CALL ON JUNE 1, IS THE FIRST CONTACT  
WE HAVE HAD WITH FAO DIRECTOR-GENERAL SAOUMA SINCE HIS RETURN ON MAY  
30  
FROM A THREE-WEEK TOUR OF CHINA AND OTHER FAR EASTERN AND SOUTH ASIAN  
COUNTRIES. SAOUMA ARGUED STRONGLY AND IN DETAIL FOR HIS \$20 MILLION  
TECHNICAL COOPERATION PROGRAM PROPOSAL WITHIN THE 1978-1979 BUDGET,  
AND  
URGED THAT THE U.S. GOVERNMENT NOT OPPOSE IT IN THE FAO COUNCIL  
MEETING BEGINNING JUNE 6.

1. AFTER BRIEF DISCUSSION OF OTHER MATTERS, SAOUMA USED MOST OF THE  
MEETING TO EXPLAIN IN DETAIL TO CONGRESSMAN FRASER HIS JUSTIFICATIONS  
FOR HIS TECHNICAL COOPERATION PROGRAM, AND TO URGE THAT THE  
UNITED STATES NOT OPPOSE IT. MOST OF HIS ARGUMENTATION HE HAD USED  
BEFORE IN OUR MANY EXCHANGES ON THIS SUBJECT. HE GAVE SOMEWHAT MORE  
STRESS THIS TIME, HOWEVER, TO HIS PERSONAL NEED TO BE ABLE  
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TO GIVE AT LEAST A LIMITED RESPONSE FROM WITHIN FAO'S OWN  
RESOURCES TO URGENT REQUESTS FOR HELP FROM MEMBER GOVERN-  
MENTS. HE SAID IT WAS NOT ENOUGH TO OFFER THEM PUBLICATIONS  
OR SEMINARS: HE NEEDS TO HAVE AT HIS DISPOSAL SOME RESOURCES  
FOR FAO ACTION, WHEN NECESSARY. HE ALSO STRESSED PARTICULARLY  
THE FACT THAT HE HAD FOUND THE FUND SFOR THE 1976-1977 TECHNI-  
CAL COOPERATION PROGRAM BY CUTS IN OTHER PORTIONS OF THE

BUDGET.

2. SAOUMA ALSO STRESSED THE FORMAL APPROVAL STATUS OF THE TECHNICAL COOPERATION PROGRAM, POINTING OUT THAT THE FAO CONFERENCE HAD DELEGATED TO THE FAO COUNCIL AUTHORITY TO APPROVE SUCH CHANGES IN THE PROGRAM OF WORK AND BUDGET, AND THAT THE FAO COUNCIL'S ACTION THEREFORE HAS THE FULL FORCE OF APPROVAL BY THE GOVERNING BODY.

3. WHEN CONGRESSMAN FRASER MENTINED THE EXPERIMENTAL CHARACTER OF THE PROGRAM, SAOUMA POINTED OUT THAT IN EFFECT THERE HAD BEEN ONLY ABOUT SIX MONTH'S EXPERIENCE WITH THE PROGRM, AND THIS CERTAINLY WAS NOT ADEQUATE FOR A JUDGMENT, TO CONGRESSMAN FRASER'S SUGGESTION THAT SOME FURTHER DEAD-LINE MIGHT BE SET TO EVALUATE THE EXPERIMENT, SAOUMA AT FIRST SEEMED SOMEWHAT AMENABLE, BUT HE THEN REMINDED THAT ONLY A FEW GOVERNMENTS HAD REGARDED IT AS AN EXPERIMENTAL, WHILE MOST HAD APPROVED IT AS A PERMANENT PROGRAM.

4. SAOUMASTRESSED HEAVILY THE STATUS OF THE PROPOSAL IN THE FAO BUDGET CYCLE. HE SAID THE PROGRAM AND FINANCE COMMITTEES HAVE APPROVED THE TECHNICAL COOPERATION PROGRAM, AND IT IS TOO LATE TO CHANGE, AND HE FURTHER EXPRESSED THE VIEW THAT IT IS TOO SOON FOR THE UNITED STATES TO MAKE A VOLTE FACE ATER HAVING APPROVED THE PROGRAM ONLY LAST YEAR. WHEN CONGRESSMAN FRASER QUESTIONED HIM ON THE TIMING OF OUR NEW ADMINISTRATION'S REPRESENTATIONS TO HIM, SAOUMA SAID THAT THEY HAD BEEN MADE ONCE ON THE EVE OF HIS DEPARTURE FOR HIS RECENT THREE-WEEK TRIP. (COMMENT: THIS WAS NOT PRECISELY CORRECT: AMBASSADOR CONFIDENTIAL

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GARDNER'S FIRST REPRESENTATIONS ON THIS POINT HAD BEEN MADE ON APRIL 26, IMMEDIATELY AFTER THE CONVENING OF THE PROGRAM AND FINANCE COMMITTEES. IT WAS HIS SECOND REPRESENTATION THAT WAS MADE ON THE EVE OF SAOUMA'S DEPARTURE).

5. THERE WERE ANTI-U.S. TONES IMPLICIT IN SOME OF SAOUMA'S REMARKS. HE SAID U.S. REFERENCES TO ITS 25 PERCENT ASSESSMENT IN CONNECTION WITH THIS ISSUE AMOUNTED TO BALCKMAIL, ADDING THAT THE UNITED STATES BY THE STANDARD FORMULA SHOULD BE PAYING MORE THAN 25 PERCENT. WHEN HE REFERRED TO ADMINISTRATOR MORSE OF UNDP, HE POINTEDLY REFERRED TO HIM AS AN AMERICAN.

6. CONGRESSMAN FRASER QUESTIONED SAOUMA ON SEVERAL POINTS AND HAD SOME DIALOGUE WITH HIM, BUT THERE WAS NO OPPORTUNITY FOR ANY BALANCED DISCUSSION BECAUSE SAOUMA HAD OPENED WITH A LENGTHY EXPOSE AND OTHER APPOINTMENTS ON BOTH SIDES CUT THE MEETING SHORT.

7. COMMENT: CONGRESSMAN FRASER LATER INDICATED TO US THAT HE

BELIEVED IT IS TOO LATE IN THE FAO BUDGET CYCLE TO HAVE  
REASONABLE EXPECTATIONS OF CUTTING THE TECHNICAL COOPERATION  
PROGRAM FROM THE 1978-1979 BUDGET.GARDNER

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